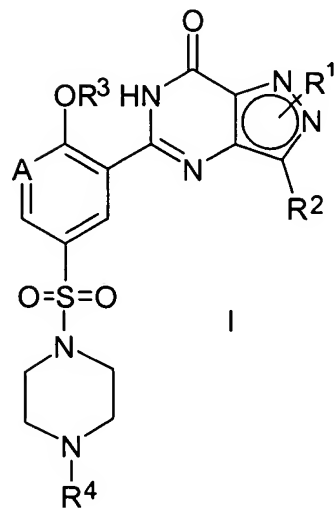


Amendments To The Claims

1-16 (Canceled)

17. (currently amended) A process for the production of a compound of general formula I:



wherein

A represents CH or N;

R¹ represents H, lower alkyl (which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by O), Het, alkylHet, aryl or alkylaryl, which latter five groups are all optionally substituted (and/or, in the case of lower alkyl, optionally terminated) by one or more substituents selected from halo, cyano, nitro, lower alkyl, OR⁵, C(O)R⁶, C(O)OR⁷, C(O)NR⁸R⁹, NR^{10a}R^{10b} and SO₂NR^{11a}R^{11b};

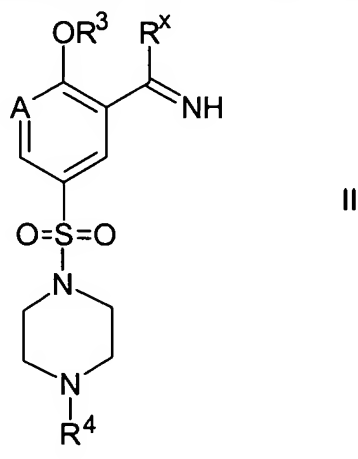
R² and R⁴ independently represent lower alkyl;

R³ represents lower alkyl, which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by oxygen; Het represents an optionally substituted four- to twelve-membered heterocyclic group, which group contains one or more heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen and sulfur;

R⁵, R⁶, R⁷, R⁸, R⁹, R^{11a} and R^{11b} independently represent H or lower alkyl;

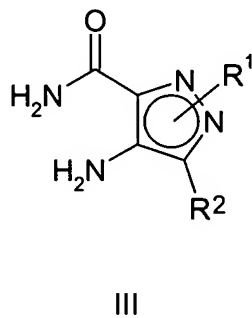
R^{10a} and R^{10b} either independently represent, H or lower alkyl or, together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached, represent azetidiny, pyrrolidiny or piperidiny,

which process comprises the reaction of a compound of formula II,



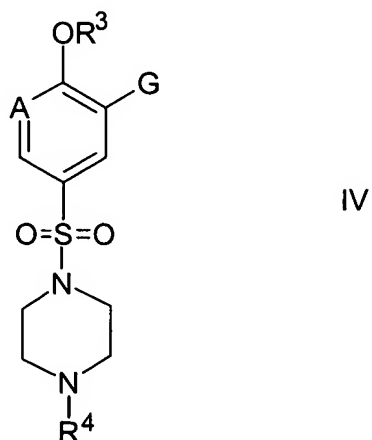
wherein Rˣ is a group substitutable by an aminopyrazole and A, R³ and R⁴ are as defined above,

with a compound of general formula III,



wherein R¹ and R² are as defined above

and A ~~process as claimed in any one of the preceding claims,~~ wherein the compound of formula II is prepared by way of reaction of a compound of formula IV,



wherein G represents a carboxylic acid group (-C(O)OH) or a derivative thereof, and ~~A, R³ and R⁴ are as defined in any one of Claims 1 and 6 to 10 (as appropriate),~~ with an appropriate reagent for converting the group G to a -C(R^x)=NH group, ~~wherein R^x is as defined in any one of Claims 1 or 11 to 13.~~

18. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 17, wherein, in the compound of formula IV, the group G represents -CN, -C(OR^e)₃, -C(O)NH₂ or -C(=NOR^f)NR₂, wherein R^f represents H or lower alkyl and R^e is ~~as defined in Claim 11~~ lower alkyl (which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by O), Het, alkylHet, aryl or alkylaryl, which latter five groups are all optionally substituted (and/or, in the case of lower alkyl, optionally terminated) by one or more substituents selected from halo, cyano, nitro, lower alkyl, OR⁵, C(O)R⁶, C(O)OR⁷, C(O)NR⁸R⁹, NR^{10a}R^{10b} and SO₂NR^{11a}R^{11b}.

19. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein, when R^x represents -OR^e (wherein R^e represents lower alkyl (optionally interrupted by O), alkylHet or alkylaryl):

- (a) a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -CN is reacted with an alcohol of formula VA,



VA

wherein R^α represents lower alkyl (optionally interrupted by O), alkylHet or alkylaryl, and Het is as defined in Claim 17 ~~Claim 1~~, in the presence of a protic acid;

- (b) a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -C(O)NH₂ is reacted with an appropriate alkylating agent of formula VB,



VB

wherein Z¹ represents a leaving group and R^α is as defined above; or

- (c) a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -C(OR^α)₃, wherein R^α is as defined above, is reacted with ammonia, or an N-protected derivative thereof.

20. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein, when R^x represents -OR^e (wherein R^e represents Het or aryl), a corresponding

compound of formula IV in which G represents -CN is reacted with a compound of formula VC,



wherein R^{β} represents Het or aryl, and Het is as defined in ~~Claim 4~~ Claim 17.

21. (original) A process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein, when R^x represents

-NH₂:

- (a) a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -CN is reacted with hydrazine, hydroxylamine or O-lower alkyl hydroxylamine, followed by reduction of the resultant intermediate under standard conditions; or
- (b) a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -C(=NOR^f)NR₂, wherein R^f is as defined in Claim 18, is reduced under standard conditions.

22. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein, when R^x represents

-NH₂, -NHR^a or -N(R^b)R^c, a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -CN is reacted with a compound of formula VD,



wherein R^x and R^{δ} independently represent H or R^a, and R^a is ~~as defined in Claim 11~~

lower alkyl (which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by O), Het, alkylHet, aryl or alkylaryl, which latter five groups are all optionally substituted (and/or, in the case of lower alkyl, optionally terminated) by one or more substituents selected from halo, cyano, nitro, lower alkyl, OR⁵, C(O)R⁶, C(O)OR⁷, C(O)NR⁸R⁹, NR^{10a}R^{10b} and SO₂NR^{11a}R^{11b}.

23. (original) A process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein, when R^x represents -SH:

- (a) a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -CN is reacted with hydrogen sulfide; or

(b) a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents $-C(O)NH_2$ is reacted with a reagent that effects oxygen-sulfur exchange.

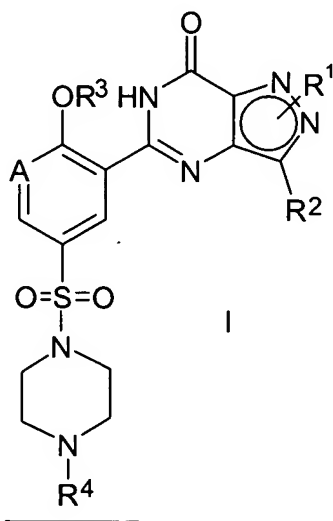
24. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein, when R^x represents $-SR^d$, a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents $-CN$ is reacted with a compound of formula VE,



wherein R^d is as defined in Claim 11 lower alkyl (which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by O), Het, alkylHet, aryl or alkylaryl, which latter five groups are all optionally substituted (and/or, in the case of lower alkyl, optionally terminated) by one or more substituents selected from halo, cyano, nitro, lower alkyl, OR^5 , $C(O)R^6$, $C(O)OR^7$, $C(O)NR^8R^9$, $NR^{10a}R^{10b}$ and $SO_2NR^{11a}R^{11b}$.

25. (original) A process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein, when R^x represents halo, a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents $-C(O)NH_2$ is reacted with a halogenating agent.

26. (currently amended) A process for the production of a compound of general formula I:



wherein

A represents CH or N;

R¹ represents H, lower alkyl (which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by O), Het, alkylHet, aryl or alkylaryl, which latter five groups are all optionally substituted (and/or, in the case of lower alkyl, optionally terminated) by one or more substituents selected from halo, cyano, nitro, lower alkyl, OR⁵, C(O)R⁶, C(O)OR⁷, C(O)NR⁸R⁹, NR^{10a}R^{10b} and SO₂NR^{11a}R^{11b};

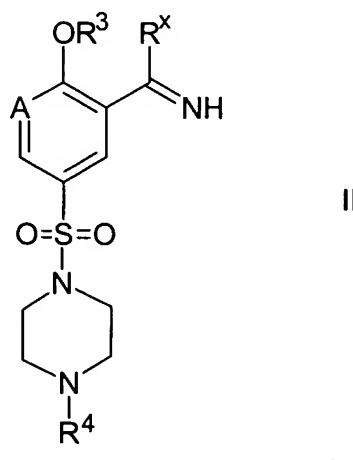
R² and R⁴ independently represent lower alkyl;

R³ represents lower alkyl, which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by oxygen;
Het represents an optionally substituted four- to twelve-membered heterocyclic group, which group contains one or more heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen and sulfur;

R⁵, R⁶, R⁷, R⁸, R⁹, R^{11a} and R^{11b} independently represent H or lower alkyl;

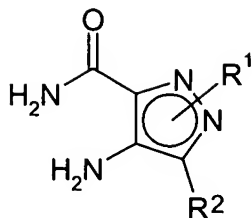
R^{10a} and R^{10b} either independently represent, H or lower alkyl or, together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached, represent azetidiny, pyrrolidinyl or piperidinyl,

which process comprises the reaction of a compound of formula II,



wherein R^x is a group substitutable by an aminopyrazole and A, R³ and R⁴ are as defined above,

with a compound of general formula III,



III

wherein R¹ and R² are as defined above

and A process as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 16, wherein the compound of formula II is prepared by way of reaction of another compound of formula II with a reagent that will convert one R^x group to another, ~~wherein R^x is as defined in any one of Claims 1 or 11 to 13.~~

27. (original) A process as claimed in Claim 26, wherein, when R^x represents -OR^e (wherein R^e represents lower alkyl, alkylHet or alkylaryl), a corresponding compound of formula II in which R^x represents Cl is reacted with a compound of formula VA, as defined in Claim 19.

28. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 26, wherein, when R^x represents -NH₂, -NHR^a or -N(R^b)R^c, a corresponding compound of formula II in which R^x represents Cl, -SH, -SR^d or -OR^e, wherein R^d and R^e are lower alkyl (which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by O), Het, alkylHet, aryl or alkylaryl, which latter five groups are all optionally substituted (and/or, in the case of lower alkyl, optionally terminated) by one or more substituents selected from halo, cyano, nitro, lower alkyl, OR⁵, C(O)R⁶, C(O)OR⁷, C(O)NR⁸R⁹, NR^{10a}R^{10b} and SO₂NR^{11a}R^{11b} ~~as defined in Claim 11,~~ is reacted with an appropriate compound of formula VD, as defined in Claim 22, or an acid addition salt thereof.

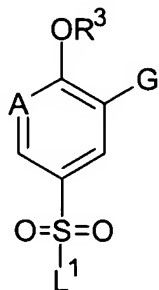
29. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 26, wherein, when R^x represents -SR^d, a corresponding compound of formula IV in which R^x represents -SH is reacted with a compound of formula VF,



VF

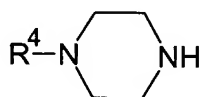
wherein Z^2 represents a leaving group and R^d is as defined in ~~Claim 11~~ Claim 28.

30. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 17, ~~any one of Claims 17 to 25~~, wherein the compound of formula IV is prepared by reaction of a compound of formula VI,



VI

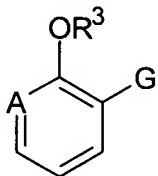
wherein L^1 is a leaving group and A, G and R^3 are as defined in Claim 17 ~~any one of Claims 1, 6, 7, 10, 17 and 18 (as appropriate)~~, with a compound of formula VII,



VII

wherein R^4 is as defined in Claim 17 ~~any one of Claims 1 and 8 to 10~~.

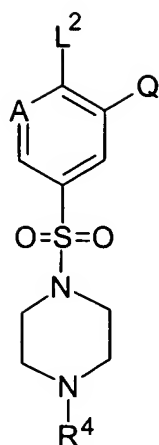
31. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 30, wherein the compound of formula VI is prepared by reaction of a compound of formula VIII,



VIII

wherein A, G and R^3 are as defined in Claim 17, ~~any one of Claims 1, 6, 7, 10, 17 and 18 (as appropriate)~~, with a reagent that may be used for the introduction of a $-SO_2L^1$ group into an aromatic or heteroaromatic ring system.

32. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 17, ~~any one of Claims 17 to 24~~, wherein the compound of formula IV is one in which G represents $-CN$ or $-C(O)NH_2$, and is prepared by reaction of a compound of formula IX,



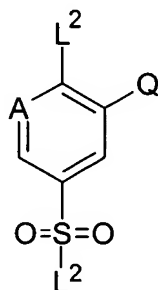
IX

wherein Q represents -CN or -C(O)NH₂ and L² represents a leaving group, and A and R⁴ are as defined in any one of Claims 1 and 8 to 10, with a compound that will provide the group R³O.

33. (original) A process as claimed in Claim 32, wherein the compound that will provide the group R³O is a lower alkyl alcohol.

34. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 32, or 33, wherein the leaving group L² is chloro.

35. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 32, any one of Claims 32 to 34, wherein the compound of formula IX is prepared by reaction of a compound of formula X,



X

wherein Q and L² are as defined in Claim 32, and A is as defined in Claim 1, with a compound of formula VII as defined in Claim 30.

36. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 17, ~~any one of Claims 17 to 24~~, wherein the compound of formula IV is one in which G represents -CN, and is prepared by dehydration of a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -C(O)NH₂.

37. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 17, ~~any one of Claims 17 to 19, 23 and 25~~, wherein the compound of formula IV in which G represents -C(O)NH₂ is prepared from a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -C(O)OH by reaction with ammonia or a derivative thereof.

38. (currently amended) A compound of formula II, as defined in Claim 17 ~~any one of Claims 1 and 11 to 13~~.

39. (original) A compound according to Claim 38 wherein A represents -CH, R³ represents Et, R⁴ represents Me and R^x represents NH₂.

40. (original) A compound according to Claim 38 wherein A represents -CH, R³ represents Et, R⁴ represents Et and R^x represents NH₂.

41. (currently amended)) A compound of formula IV, as defined in Claim 17 ~~or Claim 18~~.

42. (currently amended) A compound according to ~~Claim 39~~ Claim 41 wherein A represents N, R³ represents Et, R⁴ represents Et and G represents CO₂H.

43. (currently amended) A compound according to ~~Claim 39~~ Claim 41 wherein A represents N, R³ represents Et, R⁴ represents Et and G represents CO₂Et.

44. (currently amended) A compound according to ~~Claim 39~~ Claim 41 wherein A represents -CH, R³ represents Et, R⁴ represents Et and G represents CN.

45. (currently amended) A compound according to ~~Claim 39~~ Claim 41 wherein A represents -CH, R³ represents Et, R⁴ represents Me and G represents CN.